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And We're Off

Amanda Morgan

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Book Review

And We're Off

Author

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Reviewer

Amanda Morgan

Rating

Excellent

Level

Young Adult

Pages

255

Year

2017

ISBN

9780448493817

Publisher

Penguin Random House

Nora Parker-Holmes is an accomplished fan-fiction cartoonist preparing for the excursion of a life time, studying art in Europe. Unfortunately, her dream of a picture perfect trip is shattered when her controlling mother decides to come along. As Nora and her mother tour Europe, they run into closed museums, confusing bus routes, and a variety of contention-causing situations. Worst of all, Nora's mother doesn't appreciate her art. Despite her mother's presence, Nora is able to improve her skills and meet friends, including a cute boy her age. Eventually, Nora realizes she's not sure who she is as an artist, and as the weeks go on, she's not sure who she is as a person, a realization that makes this trip a learning experience.

And We're Off is an entertaining, quick read with a simple and easy-to-understand writing style and an extremely fast-paced plot. The book flies from one conflict to the next without much time to give depth to characters and situations. The dialogue is witty and there are many hilarious quotable descriptions. The book has several good messages, including following your dreams, building family relationships, and not depending on the approval of others for your happiness. Current pop culture is mentioned a lot, making it relatable to teens. Nora is portrayed as a pretty typical teenager, and despite being bratty and naive at times, the author makes Nora likable. All in all, the book is entertaining and insightful, but it is lacking some detail that could make it outstanding.

*Contains severe language, moderate sexual content, and mild drug abuse